

Raw Feeding Guide

Welcome to the Indy Raw Information Guide to Raw Feeding for Dogs. We have produced this free raw dog food information guide to provide you some background and to dispel some myths around the RAW diet and feeding your dog raw food.

Indy Raw Guide to Raw Feeding for Dogs

Starter Guide

1. Introduction
2. The Truth about Processed Dog Foods
3. Canine Nutrition and The Wolf Within
4. Raw Food Diet - Dispelling the Myths
 - o a) Bacteria
 - o b) The Carnivore/Omnivore Debate
 - o c) Bones
 - o d) Don't argue with nature - Why RAW is best
 - a) Physical benefits
 - b) Behavioral issues
 - c) Dogs with ailments and chronic conditions
5. The Indy Raw way"
 - o a) Our Menu
 - o b) Suggested feeding guidelines

Further reading

A Starter Guide

People new to raw feeding all have the same questions: "how do I start", "what exactly do I feed?", "how much do I feed?" All too often, people are not given the information or confidence they need to begin and this is an unfortunate barrier to getting their dog off kibble, especially if their vet is against raw feeding. This is the guide that we give to all our dog adopters at [K9 Rescue](#).

As you will learn, there really are only a few hard and fast rules in canine nutrition. No one has all the answers, not the pet food manufacturers, not the vets and not even the canine nutritionists. Yet what you will also learn, as you see the health of your dog improve and your dog start to glisten with health and vitality is that it doesn't matter. Just as we ourselves do not scientifically analyse what we eat, nor do we need to do it for our dogs.

1. RAW FEEDING GUIDELINES

The key points to remember with a raw diet are:

- Balance over time – one meal could have more bone content, another more meat or organ. The approximate ratio to aim for overall is:
 - * 80% meat, sinew, ligaments, fat
 - * 10% edible bone
 - * 5% liver
 - * 5% other organ meat
- Meats are high in phosphorus, bones are high in calcium. When meat is fed with 10% bone you have the exact ratios of calcium to phosphorus required by a dog. Whole prey, fish, eggs and tripe have a balanced ratio.
- Organ meat should not exceed 10% of the diet overall and 5% of that should be liver (beef liver has the highest nutrient levels). Feed liver once a week (or several small servings per week)

and try to find an organic, free range source if possible because the liver is responsible for filtering toxins out of the body.

- If feeding pork or salmon, be certain to freeze the meat for two weeks before feeding to reduce the small risk of parasites.
- NEVER feed cooked bones of any type as when bones are cooked they become harder and are dangerous for the dog as they can splinter and pierce the stomach or intestines. Raw bones are soft enough to bend and digest easily. Dogs are carnivores as per their scientific category (their DNA is 99% wolf) so dogs are designed to digest raw meat and bones – they have a stomach PH level of 1 or 2 which is highly acidic – perfect for digesting raw bones. It is therefore important to remember the difference between raw and cooked bones. For optimal safety, meal times should always be supervised.
- Feel free to feed 'weird and icky things' such as chicken feet, beef trachea, tails, lung, kidney, testicles and pizzles (penis). Beef trachea, trim, chicken and turkey feet are loaded in natural chondroitin and glucosamine which help to build healthy joints.
- Avoid the weight bearing leg and knuckle bones of large animals such as beef – also the vertebrae as these are too dense and dangerous to teeth. Remember! ALL bones must be fed raw – cooked bones are dangerous as they are too hard and could splinter and pierce the stomach or intestines as well as damage teeth.
- If possible, try to find grass fed animals that are not given hormones or medications if possible. Younger animals in general will have accumulated fewer toxins to pass on to your dog. You can be creative, approach organic and free range farmers and ask to buy their off-cuts.
- Carbohydrates, in particular grains, are not a natural part of the dog's diet and we do not recommend they form any part of the diet. Dogs do not have the ability to digest grains properly, so instead, an extra strain is put on the liver as it has to produce more bile to break down the insoluble fiber

·HOW MUCH TO FEED

- Most dogs eat around two to three percent of their ideal adult weight per day.
- So for example:

3% of adult weight: Keep in mind this is a generalization and should be adjusted as your dog switches to raw to make sure that they are gaining or maintaining weight appropriately.

10lbs = 5.33 oz of raw per day
50lbs = 26.65 oz or 1.67 lbs of raw per day
100lbs = 53.3 oz of food or 3.3 lbs of raw per day
150 lbs = 80.00 oz or 5 lbs of raw per day

Initially, when switching your dog to raw, we recommend starting with 2% of body weight and splitting the daily amount as follows

- * over 6 months old – split into 2 meals per day
- * for 4-6 months old – split into 3 meals per day
- * for under 4 months – split into 4 meals or more per day

1. Introduction

Welcome to the Indy Raw Guide to Raw Feeding for Dogs.

We are a family run company based in the USA who cares passionately about the well-being of dogs.

In this guide we hope to provide you with all you need to know about the raw dog food diet . We will share with you why we believe this method of feeding your canine companion is the best

way to achieve and maintain optimum health and longevity for your dog.

We will explain some facts about canine nutrition and dispel some of the myths you may have heard about a raw food diet for your dog. We will provide information about processed dog food and its connection to common ailments, and we will explain the link between your dog; and its wilder ancestor; the wolf.

And why this link is important when it comes to canine nutrition.

The objective of this guide is to impart our knowledge and passion for natural raw food feeding to enable you to make an informed decision about the optimum diet for your dog.

2. The Truth about Processed Dog Food

The first question you may be asking yourself is what is wrong with processed dog food, and why might it not be the optimum diet for my dog?

To help answer this question it may be helpful to explore the recent history of processed dog food. You will probably have come across the expression 'as fit as a butchers dog'. This is a commonly used phrase to describe a person (or animal) that is in optimum health. The phrase itself derived from the fact that not too long ago, healthy dogs were fed from the butchers, not the supermarket. It was a well known fact that a dog fed on butchers scraps would be a very lucky (and well fed) dog indeed.

Before the introduction of commercial pet food, invented by an American gentleman by the name of James Spratt in 1860, dogs ate table scraps salvaged from their human companions or anything they could scavenge or kill. There was no such thing as tinned processed dog food or kibble.

We now know that processed convenience foods are not healthy for humans, so why would processed dog foods be good for our dogs?

As a society in general we have become used to eating convenience foods, and unfortunately we have passed this 'convenience' on to our canine companions.

It is much easier to purchase a bag of kibble that will last a month from the local pet store, especially if we are told that this includes all the nutrition for our dog's needs, rather than have to worry about our dog's nutritional needs at every meal time.

However, health issues that were unheard of years ago are nowadays worryingly common in our canine companions; from obesity to food intolerance, dental conditions and cancers.

Unfortunately this has been on the increase since processed pet foods became the norm.

One of the main reasons that processed pet food is believed to be unbeneficial for a dog, and the hypothesis on which a raw food dog diet is based upon, goes back to how the dog has evolved.

Processed pet foods are unnatural, and certainly not the type of thing your dog would have eaten in the wild. For a start, processed dog food is cooked, and cooking food damages some

of the valuable 'live' enzymes found in raw meat and vegetables.

These are the very enzymes that your dog needs to be able to digest food properly.

Combine this with the fact that processed foods are full of preservatives and additives, and you come to get a clearer picture of why processed dog food is probably not the best choice of feed to keep your dog in optimum health.

It is not surprising that many of us have considered kibble to be the best food for our dogs. Let's face it; kibble is convenient, easy to store and relatively inexpensive.

Furthermore our dogs do eat and appear to enjoy it.

Many of us have also been led to believe that scientifically developed pet food 'brands' are good for our dog because this is what we have been told by the manufacturers advertising claims.

However these foods often contain products such as rice, wheat and corn.

And this brings us to a very important factor. Dogs are not humans; they have a different anatomical structure and are therefore not designed to eat grains.

Most dry commercial pet foods are at least 50% grain because the carbohydrates are needed to hold the food together. A dog does not need, and certainly cannot properly digest the amount of unnatural carbohydrates found in such feed. This goes a long way to explaining why dogs on a commercial diet have much bigger stools than those fed on a raw diet. It's the first thing people notice when they move to raw; smaller, less smelly stools due to the high digestibility of the natural food. It can take 18 hours for a dog fed on a kibble-based diet to digest this food, whereas on a natural raw food diet such as Indy Raw, the food is digested in around 6 hours.

Such dry foods can also have a relatively low percentage of good quality ingredients. And certainly not the ratio of meat proteins usually found in a good raw food diet.

And this is where health problems can arise.

It cannot be denied that in modern times the dog's natural diet has been increasingly replaced with highly processed pet foods containing a high level of grain products (as opposed to meats, offal, bones and vegetables).

We are so used to providing our dogs with food out of a tin or packet provided by commercial pet food manufacturers that have employed clever marketing tools that we have forgotten where our dogs originally came from and how they have evolved.

This poor nutrition combined with improper amounts of exercise (or none at all) are leading to serious health problems for our canine friends.

Now a days dogs suffer numerous problems which appear to be inextricably linked to their modern day processed diet, and unfortunately these conditions are on the increase. The incidence of obesity, cancers, dental problems and allergies bear testament to this.

More worryingly, there has been a recent trend for product recalls with regard to some pet food feeds and treats, due mainly to toxicity levels and other harmful ingredients.

We would not feed our human family food that we suspect could lead to health problems, so the same ethos must apply to our dogs. As our dog's carers, our dogs rely on us to provide them with love, exercise and correct species appropriate nutrition and diet.

At Indy Raw we believe that processed foods are the root cause of many persistent health problems seen today. Fortunately many of these conditions can be quickly resolved by switching to a high quality raw dog food diet

We believe that an appropriate diet for a dog is one that consists of food groups similar to those eaten by the dogs' wild ancestors i.e., the wolf.

And this is where raw dog food comes into play.

3. Canine Nutrition and the Wolf Within

The key to keeping your dog in optimum health is to give your dog foods that they were originally designed to digest.

To understand what foods a dog is designed to digest we need to take a look at the dog's most wild ancestor; the wolf.

a. The Wolf Within

If you want to provide your dog with optimum nutrition then you need to think wolf. Why? Because the wolf is the wild ancestor of your dog, and as such, they share the same internal anatomy and physiology.

They are from exactly the same family, the wolf's Latin name being "Canis Lupus," and the domestic dog named "Canis Lupus familiaris." This name classification happened in 1993 due to overwhelming scientific evidence that the gray wolf species is the common ancestor for all breeds of domesticated dogs.

Dogs, like wolves, have short digestive tracts, made specifically for processing raw meat. If you look at the anatomy and physiology of a dog, you will see that a dog is designed to eat meat. From the short intestines to the powerful jaw bones to the teeth designed for cutting and ripping flesh.

Dogs are opportunistic carnivores. And just like wolves in the wild a typical diet would involve hunting (or finding) and eating another animal.

Dogs are of course natural scavengers, and when hungry will eat almost anything. But make no mistake about it, your dog is essentially a carnivore, this means he is a natural meat eater.

Wolves have survived on the raw meat and the pre-digested foods of their prey for thousands of years. This type of diet is high in protein, easily digestible and provides optimum nutrition and energy.

Just like a wolf, you will also note that a dog's jaw only goes in one direction; up and down, unlike that of an herbivore whose jaw goes from side to side to crush vegetation. As omnivores our jaws can do both. Furthermore dogs and wolves do not produce the digestive enzyme

amylase in their saliva which aids the breakdown of carbohydrates. This is another difference between carnivores, herbivores and omnivores.

For carnivores, the burden of digesting carbohydrates is placed entirely on the pancreas.

This is why a dog's diet, just like a wolf's, needs to be full of quickly digestible nutrients. Like those found in raw meat.

Since the beginning of their evolutionary history, dogs and their wild ancestors have thrived on diets based on fresh meaty bones as opposed to grains or cereals.

This is why you would not find a dog grazing in a field for food.

In its natural environment the dog's diet would have been mainly raw, after all nobody cooked the rabbit for the wolf, likewise the chicken for the fox.

This raw meat contained live enzymes, natural anti-oxidants, fully digestible proteins, health promoting essential fatty acids, organic vitamins and minerals, etc. They were definitely not the carbohydrate-filled diets of modern processed dog food of today.

When a carnivore such as a dog or wolf eats an herbivore (for example a rabbit) it generally gets to eat some meat, bone, and organ meats. The carnivore will also digest a small amount of green vegetation found in the herbivore's digestive tract. It is these components that make up a good raw dog food diet. The vitamins and minerals in these food groups occur naturally.

Therefore mimicking what a wolf would eat in the wild is key to maintaining your dog's health in a domestic environment.

Just because your domesticated dog appears to be far removed from a wolf in its appearance and behavior; don't be fooled. Domestic dogs of today are not only capable of eating the food of their wild ancestors, but actually thrive on it. This is because despite domestication, their basic physiology has changed very little.

Therefore it makes sense that a dog fed a diet which is species appropriate (i.e. the diet which a dogs ancestors have thrived upon for thousands of years) has a high likelihood of enjoying a long and healthy life because it is eating what it was designed to eat.

Remember; dogs and wolves actually struggle to digest grains and despite marketing literature which tells you otherwise, dogs do not require large amounts of carbohydrates.

Furthermore their protein is derived from the muscle meat of other animals as opposed to protein sources such as grains and vegetable.

Unfortunately, despite owners' best intentions, many domesticated dogs are denied their natural diet. Instead they are fed processed foods which are often unchanging from day to day and most probably do not provide them with adequate nutrition.

4. Raw Food Diet - Dispelling the Myths

One has to consider that if raw dog food was dangerous, dogs would have become extinct many years ago. As we have previously mentioned, processed dog food is a relatively modern

invention, dogs have been eating raw for nearly 15, 000 years since they were first domesticated!

There are a few misconceptions around the issue of the raw food dog diet which we hope to dispel here as follows:

a. Bacteria.

An argument against the raw dog food diet is that feeding a dog raw meat can lead to bacterial infections. Bacteria are still present on the meat, and just as worrying it could be passed on to humans through poor meat preparation, or via the faeces of the dog. Some people are concerned that a dog's saliva could pass on these bacteria. We therefore cook meat because we think it renders it safe for our dogs.

Of course when preparing raw meat one should take the usual precautions that you would when feeding a member of your family, by cleaning the counter, using a clean knife and washing your hands etc.

However, we need to bear in mind that dogs are natural scavengers so are very well-equipped to deal with bacteria. In any event, they are able to deal with the low level of contamination which may be present in fresh uncooked meat. Their saliva has strong antibacterial properties; and their short digestive tract and powerful digestive juices are designed to eliminate food and 'kill' bacteria quickly.

Don't forget that dogs have been roaming the wild for years eating a variety of rotten carcasses, fruit, fresh game, grasses and herbs.

The anti-bacterial juices in their mouth and stomach are highly effective and mean they can eat things which a human cannot.

Unfortunately it is more likely that processed foods will make your dog ill.

b. The Carnivore/Omnivore debate.

Some people think dogs are omnivores, meaning they are designed to eat both vegetation and meat. It is true that dogs do and can eat vegetation, because they are opportunists, but they are anatomically carnivores. They belong to the Carnivora order and therefore in their wild state they are basically flesh eaters with powerful digestive juices.

You only need to look at the anatomy and physiology of a dog, to see that a dog is designed to eat meat. From the short intestines to the powerful jaw bones to the teeth designed for cutting and ripping flesh.

Dogs are opportunistic carnivores with omnivorous abilities. However, their entire anatomy and physiology has been designed for a meat eating diet.

This of course does not mean that they thrive on meat alone, and dogs have proven that they can survive on human dinner scraps and certain vegetation during times of hunger. However to optimize their health we need to recognize that they are first and foremost carnivores with omnivorous abilities.

The raw dog food diet recognizes this and the Wolf Tucker meals follow this principle.

c. Bones

What about bones? Despite what you may have heard, dogs do need raw meaty bones. Notice the word 'raw'. Cooking bones makes them brittle and therefore, more likely to splinter and this is why cooked bones are an issue. Do not feed your dog cooked bones.

Dogs and their wild ancestors have been eating raw meaty bones for a very long time with no ill effect.

You can see by their teeth that canines are purpose built to eat bones.

Chewing on a bone is a very stimulating activity for a dog which also releases endorphins which promote a feeling of well-being.

Perhaps the best thing about bone chewing is that it prevents tartar build up; bones act as a natural tooth brush for a dog.

Don't be fooled into thinking that dental problems for dogs are not as serious as other ailments, bad dental health left untreated can lead to the death of your dog. So it is important that uncooked bones are provided as an addition to any raw food diet.

Bones have a vital part to play in the dental health of our canine companions.

5. You can't argue with nature - WHY RAW IS THE BEST

At the end of the day; nature is indisputable. In other words, you cannot argue with nature.

If you want to feed your dog a Raw diet, it essentially means you cannot feed your dog any cooked or processed food.

An important distinction in the Raw diet from other raw dog food diets is that it does not duplicate but mimics the evolutionary diet of dogs. This means that RAW feeders do not have to send their dogs out to hunt or kill their prey, but can obtain ingredients from the local store if need be.

In the wild, dogs do not have access to veterinary care and are subject to other dangers such as starvation and natural predators; the Raw diet recognizes this. This is why the raw diet does not duplicate, but mimics its wild counterpart's diet.

Raw allows your dog to be fed a variety of human grade raw meat and bones, fruits and vegetables and supplements with the objective being that your dog will receive a balanced diet.

In the wild dogs eat meat, bones, skin, organs, stomach contents, and an array of other parts. They may feed on fruits, berries, herbs and grasses. Hence the most common raw diet consists primarily of raw, meaty bones as well as a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, muscle meat and organ meats.

The goal is not to create a well-balanced meal each day, but to create a balanced diet over a period of time

a. Benefits

Just some of the physical benefits of a raw dog food diet can be as follows:

- Cleaner teeth and fresh breath
- Better weight control
- Improved digestion
- Shinier, healthier skin and coat
- Reduction of allergy symptoms
- Harder, smaller, less smelly stools
- Increased mobility in older animals
- More energy and stamina
- Strengthened immune system
- Improved liver, pancreatic and bowel health
- Savings due to less trips to the vet

b. Behavioral issues

Aggression and behavioral issues can also be linked to poor diet, so switching your dog to a raw diet could substantially improve any behavioral issues. Some common behavioral problems which may be linked to poor diet are as follows:

- Chewing – could your dog be trying out items to see if they supply nutrients that are missing from the feed?
- Excessive digging in the garden – again, what is your dog looking for? Is he looking for nutrients in the soil?
- Food theft – is your dog hungry, is he or she lacking in nutrients from their own food supply?
- Jumping up - In the canine world, jumping up can induce vomiting/regurgitation of food. What is your dog trying to tell you?
- Hyperactivity – it is well known that a diet full of chemicals, flavorings, additives and coloring's can lead to an increase in negative energy in a dog.

I am sure you can find other examples of behavior in your own dog which might be linked to a poor diet.

c. Dogs with ailments and chronic conditions

We have previously mentioned that fresh, natural, raw dog food can significantly improve your dog's health and well being. But, not only this, it can also be of benefit to dogs that are suffering from ailments and certain chronic conditions. We have seen some dramatic improvements in the health of some dogs when fed Indy Raw .

The raw diet has been shown to assist with the following: Obesity, periodontal diseases such as gingivitis, degenerative diseases, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, reproductive health, arthritic conditions, skin allergies, ear infections, diabetes and plenty more.